# The Hour

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## THE FIFTH COLUMN TODAY

### A Summary of Axis Underground Activities and U.S. Counter-Espionage and Counter-Sabotage During Our First Year of War

Since the fateful day of December 7, 1941, when the Axis treacherously attacked the United States, many Americans have been rudely awakened to the fact that a secret enemy army has been operating for some time on American soil. This awakening was long overdue. From the day that Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, Axis spies, saboteurs and propagandists flocked into the United States. Working under the direction of the German, Japanese and Italian Military Intelligences and Propaganda Ministries, these enemy agents organized in America a complex fifth column network and launched a secret war against the United States. They were permitted to operate with incredible freedom. A graphic illustration of this fact was the German-American Bund. Created for the purpose of spying and propagandizing in the service of the Third Reich, the Bund -- which numbered some 20,000 members at its peak -- functioned unmolested for nine years before Pearl Harbor and continued to operate for seven months after Germany declared war on the United States. It was not until June, 1942, that the Bund was officially declared "un-American" (see The Hour for July 11) and the Department of Justice announced it was undertaking a nation-wide campaign "to put the Bund out of business."

Since Pearl Harbor, a number of effective counter-espionage and counter-sabotage measures have been taken against the Axis fifth column. The FBI has broken up several major German and Japanese spy rings, and has trapped a number of saboteurs, including the eight who landed this summer from Nazi submarines. Other branches of the Department of Justice have sent to prison forty-nine Axis spies for terms aggregating 530 years, have interned more than 3,000 enemy aliens, and started denaturalization proceedings against several hundred disloyal foreign-born American citizens. Labor unions have undertaken comprehensive programs for combatting enemy sabotage in key war industries. Managements in industrial plants have set up special anti-sabotage units to work with the FBI and Military and Naval Intelligence. The press has done much to acquaint Americans with the dangers of Axis sabotage and espionage.

Steps also have been taken against Axis psychological sabotage - that most deadly form of fascist sabotage which seeks to disunite and demoralize Americans by undermining their confidence in the




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U.S. war leadership, by disseminating anti-Semitic, anti-Negro and anti-"Communist" propaganda, and by stirring up suspicion against our partners in the United Nations, particularly against the Soviet Union, Great Britain and China. Father Coughlin's seditious Social Justice has been barred from the United States mails, and several similar publications suppressed. Axis propagandists, like the Nazi hireling George Sylvester Viereck and the Japanese agent Ralph Townsend, have been sentenced to jail. The Washington Federal Grand Jury recently indicted twenty-seven men and one woman on charges of conspiracy to provoke revolt and disloyalty within the United States armed forces. The Office of War Information is conducting a vigorous campaign to expose and offset the propaganda devices and the disruptive techniques of the enemy.

But the Axis fifth column is far from being smashed. It has had to change its form and tactics to some extent but it still functions on a wide scale. The ODWU (Organization for the Rebirth of the Ukraine), a fascist Ukrainian espionage-sabotage ring set up in the United States by the German Military Intelligence and having its official headquarters in Berlin, remains active and intact; in fact, in August, 1942, ODWU leaders met in New York City and publicly boasted that the majority of ODWU members were "at present employed in plants working for defense" or were in the U. S. armed forces. Many members of the Christian Front, the Ku Klux Klan and other fifth column groups continue their subversive activities. And Axis propaganda still flourishes. Flagrantly pro-Axis and viciously anti-Semitic publications, printed in a variety of languages as well as in English, appear regularly in every part of the country. The New York Daily News, the Chicago Tribune, the Washington Times-Herald and the Hearst press reach millions of Americans each day with "news stories" and editorials echoing the propaganda releases of Berlin, Rome and Tokyo. Representatives Hamilton Fish and John Rankin, Senators Robert Reynolds and Gerald P. Nye, and others in the Congressional clique which was used so advantageously by paid Axis propagandists are still in office and still fomenting disunity. The disruptive activities of Congressman Martin Dies continue to be a source of boundless delight to the Axis.

It is high time to recognize the necessity for really rooting out the enemy on the home front. Members of organizations like the ODWU should be imprisoned without further delay. Congress should enact laws making enemy sabotage a crime punishable by death. All anti-Semitic and anti-Negro publications should be suppressed and the spreading of such propaganda made a criminal offense. Father Coughlin and his fellow conspirators should be placed on trial. Stern measures should be taken by the Government against those influential publishers who use the freedom of the press as an excuse for aiding the Axis by fomenting doubt and disunity among the American people. Former Axis collaborators in Congress should be investigated by the Department of Justice, and the findings made public.

The enemy on the home front must be fought no less determinedly than the enemy abroad.

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## WAR RECORD OF THE HOUR

The Hour takes pride in the fact that it was the first to expose the espionage, sabotage and propaganda activities of a number of the Axis agents and their native American fifth column collaborators who have been rounded up by the Federal authorities since December 7, 1941. Here are some of the cases which were broken by this newsletter:

### Werner C. von Clemm

In a detailed and exclusive expose carried in The Hour on May 24, 1941, we revealed that the New York German-American diamond merchant Werner C. von Clemm was smuggling diamonds and other precious stones into the United States, in collusion with high officials of the Third Reich, for purposes of financing Nazi activity in America. On June 28, 1942, Von Clemm was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury on charges of conspiring with the German High Command to smuggle illegal shipments of gems into the United States. He was tried, found guilty and sentenced to two years in prison and fined $10,000.

### Ferdinand A. Kertess

On July 25 of this year, The Hour exposed the subversive work which the wealthy German-American business man, Dr. Ferdinand A. Kertess, and his so-called Chemical Marketing Company had been carrying on in the service of the Third Reich. Congressman John M. Coffee of Washington incorporated our report in its entirety in the Congressional Record. These charges against Dr. Kertess were repeated in Sabotage! -- The Secret War Against America, the book by Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, editors of The Hour. On August 8 we were able to report in this newsletter that the U.S. Treasury Department had seized the property of the Chemical Marketing Co.; and early in November the Department of Justice indicted Dr. Kertess on charges of transporting to Germany rare strategic metals sorely needed by the Nazis for making ersatz products.

### "Count" Anastase Vonsiatsky

On July 30, 1939, and in subsequent issues, The Hour revealed that "Count" Anastase Vonsiatsky of Thompson, Connecticut, had participated in a series of torture murders before coming to this country; that he had concealed these crimes when he applied for his citizenship papers and has thus obtained them illegally; and that ever since his arrival in this country he had conspired to overthrow its government, operating in collusion with the German and Japanese Military Intelligences and key native American fifth columnists. In June, 1942, the FBI smashed the Axis spy ring of which Vonsiatsky was a leading member and Vonsiatsky himself was found guilty of conspiring to violate the Espionage Act and divulge military information to Germany and Japan. Vonsiatsky was sentenced to serve a prison term of five years and was fined $5,000.

### Theodore Wozniak

On April 5, 1941, we mentioned the name of Theodore Wozniak, World War I saboteur, in connection with a railroad wreck near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which had been caused by sabotage on March 16, 1941, and which had resulted in the death of five persons. We revealed that Wozniak had been in touch with a group of fascist Ukrainian terrorists who shortly before the wreck had secretly conferred in Pittsburgh with an agent of the German Military Intelligence. Early in August, 1942, Wozniak was taken into custody by the Federal authorities.

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Father Coughlin

Six weeks after the United States entered the war against the Axis, on January 21, 1942, The Hour became the first publication to urge that Father Charles E. Coughlin's Social Justice be suppressed on the grounds that it was publishing seditious material. On April 14, Coughlin's magazine was barred from the mails because of its seditious content.

Ralph Townsend

The Japanese propaganda activities of Ralph Townsend, prominent spokesman for the America First Committee and editor of Scribner's Commentator, were first revealed in the November 23, 1941 issue of The Hour. A Federal Grand Jury indicted Townsend on January 28, 1942, on charges of failing to register as a propaganda agent for the Japanese Government. Townsend was subsequently sentenced to serve two to six years in prison.

Robert Jordan

On August 23, 1941, The Hour revealed that fascist agents were engaged in a conspiracy to spread pro-Axis propaganda among the Negro people in Harlem, and that a ringleader in this fifth column plot was Robert Jordan, head of the fascist Ethiopian Pacific League. In October, 1942, United States Attorney Matthias H. Correa announced the indictment and arrest of Robert Jordan, on charges of conspiring to overthrow the United States Government and of spreading Japanese propaganda.

National Workers League

On June 30, 1939, The Hour exposed the fifth column character of the National Workers League in Detroit, and named Parker Sage as the man behind this Hitlerite band. On January 8, 1942, the offices of the National Workers league were raided and closed by Government agents; and in April, Parker Sage was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for seditious activities.

Domenico Trombetta

On June 1, 1940, we carried our first article exposing the Italian propaganda activities of Domenico Trombetta, editor and publisher of Il Gride della Stirpe (The Cry of the Race.) In September, 1942, the Department of Justice announced that Trombetta had been divested of his U.S. citizenship and seized by the FBI as a dangerous enemy alien.

All of the twenty-eight persons indicted on July 23, 1942, by the Department of Justice on charges of conspiracy to provoke revolt and disloyalty within the United States armed forces, had been previously named in The Hour. The records of most of them were first exposed in detail in this newsletter. Among those indicted and first fully exposed in The Hour were Gerald B. Winrod, publisher of The Defender of Wichita, Kansas; Court Asher, publisher of X-Ray of Muncie, Indiana; Prescott Dennett, organizer of the Islands for War Debts Committee of Washington, D.C.; C. Leon De Aryan, publisher of The Broom of San Diego, California; David J. Baxter, organizer of the Social Republic Society of San Bernardino, California; Charles B. Hudson, publisher of America in Danger! of Omaha, Nebraska; Elmer J. Garner, publisher of Publicity of Wichita, Kansas; Edward James Smythe, organizer of the Protestant War Veterans of New York City; and William Dudley Pelley, publisher of The Galilean of Noblesville, Indiana, and organizer of the Silver Shirts.



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With the United States at war it becomes all the more imperative to expose the work of Axis spies, saboteurs and propagandists on the home front and their Quisling accomplices. The Hour hopes to continue with increasing effectiveness to investigate and reveal enemy conspiracies and propaganda which menace the U.S. war effort.

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NOTE

During the four years of its existence as an anti-Axis newsletter, naming names and exposing the records of hundreds of enemy agents and native fifth columnists, The Hour has maintained a standard of accuracy of which it has reason to be proud. On only three occasions has The Hour published statements which proved, on further investigation, to have been inaccurate. On each of these three occasions, The Hour has unhesitatingly acknowledged its error and has published the correct facts, as in the following statement:

In the December 13 and December 30, 1941, and in the February 21 and March 7, 1942 issues of The Hour we made several statements to the effect that Nikifor Grigorieff and Fedor Mansvetov were maintaining connections with the Nazis and were active agents of the Gestapo; that they were furthering Fifth Column machinations in this country; and that they were themselves Nazis. From data we have subsequently received, we have reached the conclusion that these statements about Grigorieff and Mansvetov are not true and are based upon information which is incorrect. The Hour therefore recommends that a correction be carried by any publication or radio broadcasting companies which reprinted or published our original statement. We regret any embarrassment which may have been caused Nikifor Grigorieff and Fedor Mansvetov.

All of the other charges made in the above issues concerning Grigorieff and Mansvetov, it has been agreed, will be referred to a special committee. This committee is to hear all of the evidence and determine whether or not such charges are true or false. The findings of this committee will be published in a subsequent issue of The Hour.

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